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**Teacher Diversity Training: Revealing Biases and Changing Practices**

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Teacher Diversity Training:
Revealing Biases and Changing Practices

Senior Project Submitted to
The Division of Math Science and Computing
of Bard College

by
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Abstract

Black students are disciplined in K-12 schools at higher rates when compared to their White peers. Research has shown that this inequality in treatment can be traced back to the teachers' biases and prejudices against students of color. Lack of support from teachers can harm students’ academic achievement and overall success outside of school as well. In response, various programs have been implemented to help teachers better support all of their students. For example, Social Emotional Learning (SEL) has been successful at helping teachers facilitate learning in an emotionally sensitive way. This program began as an initiative to help teachers support Black students, but the research has shown that even this program, like schools in general, winds up supporting White students disproportionately. SEL has been critiqued for not sufficiently focusing on how to best support Black and Brown students. There are, however, several more recent initiatives in place for working teachers to help them reflect on their biases and classroom practices. Building on these cultural awareness initiatives already in place, the hypothetical study proposed in this paper is an intervention focused on how anti-Blackness is driving the significantly higher rates of Black students being disciplined in school. This research hypothesizes that after teachers undergo a three-month diversity training program to reflect on their own biases, and become better advocates for their Black students, Black students with teachers in the experimental group will show, based on mock data, an equal grade improvement compared to their White peers. Based on the mock data symbolizing student surveys scores, this research also hypothesizes that Black students will have a better connection to their teachers compared to the students of color in the control group.

Key words: Teachers, Biases, Anti-Blackness, Diversity Training, Black Students
Teacher Diversity Training:

Revealing Biases and Changing Practices

No one wants to be labeled as racist, so conversations around racism can get stunted. When discussing racism, people often assume you are accusing them of extreme forms of racism, like burning a cross, or a person yelling racist slurs, or being a segregationist. Many do not know that racism can be more covert and can manifest itself in ways that go against our common ideas of what racism looks like. This lack of awareness of one's own prejudices is called implicit bias. Racism goes beyond slavery and the civil rights movement. It exists in the institutions and the quick judgements, or stereotypes, about people of different backgrounds than our own. Many would not say they are racist, but little do they know this is contributing to the problem. In denying their own racism, it leaves them unable to acknowledge or see how more subtle forms of racism are affecting their everyday view of the world. Everyone is subject to these biases, including the teachers in the school system. Educators are tasked with the responsibility of teaching and supporting students of all different backgrounds and races equally, so it is vital that they feel prepared as they step into that role. However, this is often not the case. The first mistake a teacher can make when working with their students is being ignorant of their own biases, implicit or explicit. This ignorance is the mechanism that can severely harm students of color.

People of color are introduced to our racist society from the time they are born. As soon as they enter the school system they face prejudices and biases from their teachers. It is every student's right to have their school be a safe place for them to learn and grow with the support of their teachers (United Nations, 1948). Unfortunately, this right is not always guaranteed. Students of color, and specifically Black students, are disciplined at higher rates compared to
their White peers (Milner, 2013). Anti-Black racism, or the racism and stereotypes inflicted and targeted at the Black community, impacts Black students in the school system. Black students are getting pulled out of the classrooms and suspended at higher rates, which inevitably causes them to miss time in the classroom and can hinder their academic performance (Milner, 2013). Research conducted by (Balfanz et al., 2015) found that Black students in Florida’s schools make up a smaller percentage of students in the school system compared to their White students, but almost half of the individuals who are suspended in school identify as Black. On the other hand, White students are suspended at far lower rates in Florida, but make up more of the population compared to their Black peers (Balfanz et al., 2015). The targeting and suspension of Black students can lead to these students dropping out of school, and increases their odds of being arrested dramatically, which is a phenomenon called the school to prison pipeline (Heitzeg, 2009). Black students are being criminalized by the school system. Teachers need to be advocates and serve as support systems for all of their students. In order for this to occur, schools need to be implementing diversity training and opportunities for school staff to learn how to overcome their prejudices and biases.

Researchers continue to point to a common trend of Black students being overly represented in discipline rates in K-12 schools. Research focusing on schools in New York City and Boston found that Black students were being disciplined at the highest rates compared to their peers, and White students at the lowest rates (Crenshaw, 2015). From the years 2011 to 2012, in New York City schools, ninety percent of girls being expelled identified as Black (Crenshaw, 2015). Crenshaw (2015) conducted qualitative research in which she held a focus group for Black girls attending school in Boston. This gave these students the opportunity to speak personally about their own experiences and relationship to school. They all shared a
common feeling of mistrust and disconnection from most of their teachers, due to their teachers' constant criminalization of them. They also expressed an awareness of educators not believing in them, which hindered their relationship to learning and teachers (Crenshaw, 2015). Teachers’ lack of awareness or understanding of the intersectionality, or the multiple forms discrimination Black women and girls experience, which can be a combination of anti-Blackness, racism, and sexism, has been found to hinder teachers ability to empathize and support Black students, and instead criminalize them further (Anamma et al., 2016). The discrimination that the students' in Crenshaw’s (2015) research experienced made them feel more inclined to disengage from school or drop out completely.

Black students being disciplined at higher rates compared to their peers has been thoroughly investigated by past research. To demonstrate the extent to which educators are targeting Black students Owens (2022), conducted a study in which teachers looked at videos and vignettes of students of varying races engaging in misbehavior, and they were asked what course of action the teacher should take. The participants were unaware that students were all engaging in the same behavior, and when they were later surveyed they were significantly more likely to find the misbehavior of Black boys as more “blameworthy” (Owens, 2022, p. 1026). Owens (2022) used eye tracking software to see where the teachers were looking as they watched the students in the videos and found that teachers spent much more time watching the Black students, and even most frequently gazing at the Black boys, compared to the others. This study reveals how prone teachers are to over-police their Black students.

Research such as the ones previously mentioned are a few of the numerous studies that bring attention to the harmful criminalization of Black students within the school system, and the urgency to enact change and support these students. Milner (2013) and Crenshaw (2015)
highlight the overwhelming rates of Black students being suspended from school, which in turn makes them more likely to drop out. This is a matter that cannot be taken lightly, as being suspended and dropping out of school can also increase the chances of the student being arrested, as Milner (2013) brings attention to. It is important to note that the Black community is additionally vulnerable, as they are more likely to be arrested due to anti-Blackness perpetrated by cops and the justice system (Penner, & Saperstein, 2015). These studies highlight the intersectionality of discrimination, and show that not all people of color experience discrimination within our society and in the school system to the same extent. While it is important for teachers to address all of their biases, and support all of their students of color, it is also important that teachers understand this disproportionate targeting of the Black community. The current study aims to address the importance of understanding terms like anti-Blackness, to help bring awareness to the extent to which Black students within the school system experience racism.

This current research proposal theorizes that the more trained teachers are to work with and support Black students, the more their students will feel understood by their teachers. In turn, this study proposes that training will help teachers be less likely to let their own biases dictate how they treat Black students. If a diversity training program is going to be effective I propose that teachers need to reflect on and change their prior assumptions through discussions, readings, projects, and writing assignments in a training cohort. The material they engage in needs to be focused in anti-Black racism to bring awareness to the ongoing racial injustices towards the Black community. In addition, they need to continue to put effort into collaborating with their peers and students to ensure the space they create for their students is inclusive and supportive.
Teachers should strive to ensure that they are meeting the emotional and academic needs of all of their students.

SEL

Schools have already implemented practices to help teachers make sure they are sensitive to students' emotions. Social Emotional Learning (SEL) has become a very popular practice in the United States and can be used in Kindergarten through 12th grade (Mahoney et al., 2021). SEL has been designed to help students in their ability to manage and understand their own emotions. Another goal of SEL within schools is to help students form positive relationships with their peers and educators, which can hopefully foster their students to view their learning environment as a safe and supportive space. Schools with SEL-based philosophies also usually encourage family involvement and student agency in their learning experience (Mahoney et al., 2021). A meta-analysis found that students at schools with SEL practices had positive associations with how they viewed themselves, their peers, and their learning environment (Durlak et al., 2011). They suggest that these positive associations resulted in the students' improved academic performance as well (Durlak et al., 2011). Given the reported academic and social achievements of students in these schools, SEL continues to be considered by many a successful program for schools at large.

Proponents of the ideas used in today’s SEL programs can be traced back to ancient Greece. In Plato’s book The Republic, he wrote about the importance of academics and social skills to help the child grow and develop in our society (Edutopia, 2011). However, it wasn’t until more recently that schools began to think about how to implement these practices in a way that could help children learn beyond typical fact based education. In the 1960s, James Comer began to create and test his program called the Comer School Development Program at Yale’s
School of Medicine’s Child Study Center (Edutopia, 2011). The program focused on students at two predominantly Black schools in Connecticut. These students came from lower-income families, and they had lower reported grades. The program helped schools to create a team composed of teachers and parents. These teams collaborated to find practices to implement in the classroom that would best support the students' growth both socially and academically. By 1980, they found that students' academic performance excelled above average, compared to the rest of the nation (Comer, 1991). In 1994 this practice, which showed overwhelming success, was named Social Emotional Learning and the movement took off (Edutopia, 2011). SEL became even more popular when Daniel Goleman, a New York Times reporter, released a book on it in 1995 (Edutopia, 2011). To this day, organizations like CASEL encourage schools to implement SEL and provide practices teachers can adopt, based on evidence-based methods (Graczyk et al., 2000).

For the program to be successful, SEL approaches need to be well-strategized (Mahoney et al., 2021). Durlak et al. (2011) researched specific practices for SEL that have been successful for students. The researchers discuss the importance of teachers assisting students in understanding and recognizing their own emotions. In addition, students are encouraged to respect their peers by actively listening and processing the beliefs and emotions of others. They add, teachers also encourage their students to have positive relationships with their classmates. Another practice that SEL reinforces is helping students participate in responsible problem-solving and working through conflict with their peers in a civil manner (Durlak et al., 2011). An example of a course of action for SEL was conducted in a study, not focusing on SEL specifically but containing similar goals, by Ladd and Mize (1983), which highlighted ways in which social training can help students understand and practice prosocial behavior. They note
that modeling the behavior, rehearsal of the desired prosocial behavior, and using self-evaluation by teachers and students fosters the learner’s own understanding and allows the child to gain new social skills (Ladd & Mize, 1983). In addition, it helps build a sense of community through teacher, student, and family involvement, which can also help foster positive associations to school and social skills (Cook et al., 1999, as cited in Ladd & Mize, 1983). There is no one exact course of action for SEL, but rather a vast set of practices and beliefs that schools and teachers can integrate into their curriculum as they best see fit (Durlak et al., 2011).

SEL has been found to be effective in supporting students' social and academic growth. Soland and Kuhfeld (2022) conducted a study that looked at middle school students' growth with SEL and their academic and social achievement in later academic years. Their research showed that the extent to which students in middle school practice and grow in their ability to exercise SEL taught behaviors was a predictor of the chances of that student doing well as they enter high school (Soland & Kuhfeld, 2022). Their research showed that the better students scored with SEL, through a self-reported survey on “self-efficacy and self-management” over the course of a couple of years, the better chance they would have a higher GPA, and the less likely they were to get suspended, even when background variables and academic performance were both controlled for (Soland & Kuhfeld, 2022, p. 540). The ability of the student to practice self-management skills, which is something SEL implements, was a predictor of the chance that the student would not fall behind at the start of high school. In addition, the student's ability to improve in their SEL scores was a good indicator of their ability to succeed academically and socially. The researchers found that this growth in SEL scores was an indicator that the students were greatly influenced by their environment. This reinforces the importance of schools implementing SEL so that students do not fall off track in their transition to high school. Soland and Kuhfeld (2022)
noted that self-confidence is also something that decreases in middle school, despite academic growth. The researchers state that positive reinforcement is something that teachers should practice to validate their students' academic growth and change common negative thought patterns. This validation from teachers can help students feel more self-sufficient and confident, which will lessen the likelihood of them falling behind.

Despite the perceived effectiveness of SEL, there have also been criticisms of the program's approach. SEL has been called a *colorblind* approach to go about working with students (Kennedy, 2019). Despite the results of meta-analyses on the positive effect of SEL (Durlak et al., 2011), this program's effectiveness on students of color specifically has not been sufficiently explored. Jones et al. (2020) tackles this dilemma in their research on SEL and how it has academically impacted Black students. Jones et al. (2020) argue that there is an achievement-gap in schools between White and Black students, which should really be called an *education debt* which puts the responsibility of fixing these racial injustices on the school administration. Additionally, they state that the common dilemma of programs like SEL is that they do not investigate how their initiative will impact students based on their race. After focusing on a school practicing SEL, the researchers found that SEL was only positively related to higher grades for White students and not students of color. They conclude that for SEL to be successful, it needs to take into account varying cultures and how administrative biases may hinder students' experience with SEL (Jones et al., 2020).

Another critique of SEL is that it often does not properly train teachers and implement initiatives that take into account students of different cultures and racial backgrounds. Barnes (2019) looked at many different SEL interventions at varying schools that prioritized focusing on the mental health of their students. Barnes reviewed 66 studies that looked into schools in urban
neighborhoods that were practicing SEL. One of the takeaways was a lack of research on how much SEL applied to students of different cultural backgrounds and to what extent it was socially relevant (Barnes, 2019). Specifically, there seemed to be a lack of research on how well the teachers were trained to use SEL with students of different racial backgrounds and/or to what extent the intervention was created while taking into account varying cultures and races. There was a shortage of work done on how to implement cultural awareness in the classroom and in the teachers' practices. Only 9 of the 66 schools studied had a strategy in place on how to properly train teachers and/or implement SEL in the classroom that was inclusive to non-White students. This finding addresses the dilemma of SEL initiatives needing to be more conscious of how to make sure the program is resonating with their non-White students, and how institutions can better prepare their teachers to work with students who, most of the time, don’t share the same cultural background as themselves.

There have been studies supporting and critiquing SEL and how it has been implemented in schools. The researchers that are against its use do not seem to be concerned with the philosophy of SEL itself, but rather how it has been practiced—specifically, that SEL does not take into account how to help teachers and the school system support non-White students. In order to address this dilemma programs have been created to help better train school staff to work with students of varying races and cultural backgrounds. Diversity programs are important for schools to implement, as they can help teachers become more aware of their bias and continue educating themselves, as well as help schools keep their overall practices in check. Diversity programs in place have been one of many initiatives aimed at attempting to improve the current imbalances within the school system, which have harmed and continue to disadvantage students of varying racial and cultural backgrounds.
IET

As stated previously, there needs to be more research on how SEL impacts non-White students in schools (Jones et al., 2020). In addition, SEL has also been criticized for being colorblind as few initiatives have tailored the program to meet the needs of non-White students (Kennedy, 2019; Barnes, 2019). A possible direction to help SEL become more inclusive of students of different racial backgrounds could be adding a diversity training program for teachers. A program that specifically addresses cultural differences, race, and racial biases is a program called Initiatives in Educational Transformation (IET). The program was created in 1992 to help schools connect with their community (Shockley & Banks, 2011). IET's ongoing goal is to empower teachers to feel supported as they work with students of varying races and backgrounds. Participants gain a Master of Arts degree in Teaching (MAT) after the 2-year program. The teachers in this program did arts and crafts, read, and participated in reflections through prompted free writing and discussions. All of these activities served as therapeutic exercises which helped them reflect on their practices and their ideas about race, bias, and prejudice. They also engaged in discussions on White privilege based on their readings.

Something to note was that most of the participants were White and came into the program not admitting to any personal biases about race. Throughout the program, teachers were asked to write reflections and a final essay at the end of the program.

Data on the individuals in the IET cohort was collected qualitatively through interviews, observations, and reflections in their journal entries throughout the program (Shockley & Banks, 2011). They found that the participants were initially resistant to admit their own biases, but they could acknowledge the racist society we live in. This tendency could be an indicator of the participants unawareness of their biases, or unwillingness to open up and begin the process of
self-reflection. Towards the middle of the training program, they became aware of their own implicit biases, and at the end, they believed they’d changed and wished that society would too. To make sure participants felt open to sharing their beliefs, a safe space was established by the mentors. One way the facilitators did this was by making sure the writing assignments for teachers remained very general about society and their own beliefs and not framed in an accusatory manner. In addition, the smaller and consistent cohort helped build a sense of community between the participants. During the second year participants took an Implicit Associations Test (IAT), which is an online test with varying categories, from race, skin tone, to gender to name a few. IAT can reveal our own implicit biases against a specific group of people, based on the test category. After the participants saw their IAT results they were instructed to choose the group they showed bias against and write an essay about it. The essay included ways their environment may have influenced their bias, how this could be influenced by society and its social structures, and the ways in which it may influence them in a classroom setting. After this test was completed, in the following days they were asked to reflect on times their prejudice/bias was prevalent in the classrooms towards their students and times they had witnessed other teachers exhibiting similar behavior. In addition, the participants did art activities to reflect on times they were prejudiced against a student(s).

Contrasting essays from the first and second years showed a large amount of growth in the participants (Shockley & Banks, 2011). The final essays were more reflective of their own biases and how it is their job to actively acknowledge them and act on confronting them. After the program, 66% of the teachers said that IET had an impact on their understanding of their own racial bias and helped them feel more connected to people that have different backgrounds and/or racial identities than their own. A key point is that most of the teachers made it their mission to
continue to educate themselves. The teachers believed they were able to discuss and process these topics because they felt safe to do so in the IET program (Shockley & Banks, 2011).

Based on interviews, researchers have investigated teachers' philosophies and practices after completing the IET program. Demulder and Rigsby (2003) examined how teachers’ practices changed after completing the program. They studied these changes by looking at the teachers' reflections and how they implemented what they learned from IET into their classrooms. The researchers note one teacher who discussed that after the training they found that having good connections with the child’s family better helped them understand and tailor their practices to meet the needs of the individual child. Other teachers mentioned that reflection through written assignments and the discussions they had in their cohort throughout the IET program helped them better understand themselves, but also understand their students of different racial and/or cultural backgrounds (Demulder & Rigsby, 2003). In addition, some teachers described how they felt like they had more confidence as a teacher after their experience in their cohort, and when they began to teach they inserted themselves more in school policy making to further advocate for their students. For example, the researchers mentioned how one teacher attended meetings for their students that needed extra support. The teacher didn’t necessarily need to attend the meetings, but they did if it meant being able to give their students the best shot at attaining deserved accommodations. Something a lot of teachers noted was that the opportunity to better understand themselves helped them feel more inspired to change and continue to learn (Demulder & Rigsby, 2003).

Alternate Diversity Training Programs and Practices

Many researchers have looked into how to best empower teachers while working in culturally and racially diverse classrooms. Wittmer (1992) states that a growing cultural diversity
in the United States means that teachers need to be prepared to take into account these varying backgrounds. They propose a model to effectively support teachers on this journey called ASK. The “A” stands for awareness, which is valuable in making sure teachers are aware of their students' cultural background and equally value it. The “S” stands for sensitivity, which refers to the teacher being sensitive to how a student's culture may or may not influence their behavior and respecting their students’ beliefs, and how they can communicate with their students based on that information. Finally the “K” stands for knowledge, in the context of teaching, addressing the teachers’ ability to continue to learn about their students’ cultures and backgrounds, as well as their own (Wittmer, 1992). These core values are important when thinking about what philosophies teachers can prioritize for their practices. The ASK model has been used in some IET related programs.

Given that the IET program is over the course of two years and is usually for individuals trying to obtain a masters in teaching, to make the training more accessible to full time teachers this current research proposal aims at condensing a program into a shorter training period. A training program that is similar to IET, but is an example of a shorter diversity training program is called Integrating Culturally Diverse Students into the Greek Educational System Through In-Service Teachers Empowerment and Systematic Training in Cultural Awareness (Psalti, 2007, p. 150). This program was implemented in Greece for primary school teachers. Psalti (2007) investigated this teacher training program that was encouraged due to the growing cultural and racial diversity from immigrant families entering Greece. Based on the diversity of backgrounds, psychologists in Greece wanted to make sure that the teachers there were prepared to meet the needs of all of their students (Psalti, 2007). The training program used the ASK model. The cohort met eight times over the course of three months, each session lasting six hours. The
trainer led group activity and the assistant trainer observed and took notes on group discussions. Self-evaluations were done by the teachers, in which they reflected on their experience. Most of the teachers described the effectiveness of the activities, especially those that addressed their own possible biases and stereotypes, and how that may impact how they treat their students. The researchers found that most of the teachers were satisfied with the program and felt they could better support and approach students of diverse cultural backgrounds. The overall goal of this program was to help teachers continue to educate themselves to feel confident to work with all of their students, and to highlight how important it is to make diversity training accessible to school staff (Psalti, 2007).

Overall, the research around the Greek cultural awareness training presents itself as an accessible and productive program to help teachers feel more prepared to work with their students. However, there are some limitations that arise from how the study was conducted. Psalti (2007) claims that teachers felt better equipped to work with students of varying cultural backgrounds, but it is hard to know what they are actually doing in their practice, since these statements are all self-reported. This opens up the possibility that teachers may feel they are more aware than they are in reality, or could be making false statements about themselves in the hopes of appearing better to the researcher, something known as subject bias. Psalti (2007) does not mention any reports to how this training actually impacted the educational experience of the students, but instead focuses on the teachers perspectives on the impact the program had on themselves. This makes it harder to predict the effectiveness of the study and how much of it was subject to the researchers and participants bias. The same critique can be said for the Shockley and Banks (2011) article, which also solely focused on teachers' self-reported practice shift and awareness of their own biases, which once again can be limited by their subject bias. That being
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said, it is important for researchers to investigate the best ways of operationalizing the success of a diversity training.

The Current Research

Researchers often use students' success in the classroom to assess the effectiveness of their teachers. Educators are tasked with an important job, as they have a big influence on their students. When a student feels academically and socially supported by their teacher, research has found that this can help students become more engaged in the classroom, which also improves their grades (Klem & Connell, 2004). In addition, when a student forms positive associations with their learning environment and school community, it can help students be more inspired to attend school (Ewing et al., 2021). These positive associations to school can be encouraged by staff helping their students feel seen and understood based on the students individual needs (Ewing et al., 2021). Understanding the link between teacher support and student success is vital, as it emphasizes the importance of schools to prepare teachers and school administration to have the proper tools to support all of their students. Instead of focusing on the teachers' perception of their own behaviors, this current research proposal utilizes the experiences and academic outcomes of the students to better understand the teachers' practices.

The overall goal of this research is to better understand how a diversity training program could impact teachers in their practices in how they treat their Black students. Specifically, looking at how the training impacts the experiences of their students. Given that Black students have been found to be disciplined at significantly higher rates in New York City (Rodriguez & Welsh, 2022), this research proposal will be focused on schools in this location. Given that there is a lack of research on how SEL influences the educational experiences of students of color (Barnes, 2019), this study will specifically investigate how a diversity training program can help
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teachers better support Black students. If the diversity training is researched beyond this proposal and shows to be an effective course of action for teachers, it can be something administrations can implement in addition to the programs they have in place, like SEL. The goal of this diversity training is to address the criticisms of SEL in that it has not properly addressed how to support their non-White students (Barnes, 2019). In addition, the current research highlights a need to better support Black students' academic growth, as SEL has also been criticized for only showing a positive correlation for academic advancement for White students (Jones et al., 2020).

The IET program is an example of how becoming aware of one's biases and prejudices can help teachers reflect and improve their practices in the classroom. Since both Shockley and Banks’ (2011) IET and Psalti’s (2007) cultural awareness program didn't measure how the training impacted the academic experience of the students, and instead focused on teachers' perception of their stereotypes changing over time, this study will instead focus on how their students view their teachers practices and how the students GPA changes over time. This would both be measured before and after the training period. Given that the IET program is very long, this training program will also offer a shorter training period that could be more accessible to teachers. The research hypothesizes that this diversity training will help teachers become more aware of their biases and better support their Black students. This will be revealed by these students with teachers who underwent the training showing a more equal grade improvement compared to their White peers over the course of a year, as well as in increased connection to their teachers through survey responses before and after the training.

**Methods**

**Participants**
Teachers will be recruited from four different middle schools in New York City. State law requires schools to implement SEL into their teaching practices, so it can be assumed that these schools already have integrated SEL into their curriculums (Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, 2011). The specific schools would be schools like MS 443 located in Brooklyn, NY, Academic Leadership Charter School, located in The Bronx, NY, MS 51, located in Brooklyn, NY, and The Louis Armstrong Middle School, located in Queens. For this study we would aim to get 100 teachers to be recruited from the schools. All teachers from specific grades will be asked to participate, therefore teachers would be from varying racial backgrounds. This study is focused on a more school-wide training approach, rather just focusing on White teachers as Shockley and Banks’ (2011) research did. Out of the 100 participants, I would estimate that 60% of the participants would identify as female and 40% as male and some identifying as non-binary. Participants will be randomly assigned either to the control group or experimental group.

Given that the students are from New York City they should be from varying racial and cultural backgrounds. The students will be from sixth and seventh grade, and after the time period of the intervention they will be in seventh and eighth grade. All students in the teachers first class period will be surveyed. Since this research is investigating how to better support Black students, given their significantly higher discipline rates, only data from Black students will be analyzed, and White students data will be used for comparison.

Materials

Surveys

In order to assess the effectiveness of the training on teachers' practices, students of the teacher will be evaluated. Students will receive a teacher evaluation survey with a Likert scale,
where they can answer on a scale of strongly agree to strongly disagree, answering statements about the relationship they have with their teacher. The survey was created based on the goals of this specific study. The questions were curated to get a sense of the relationship the students have to their teachers (see Appendix A).

**Student Information**

On the survey students receive they will be asked to identify their race, the grade they are in, and their gender. Gender will not be used for this research proposal, but was included in the survey for possible future exploratory variables. Students’ grades paired with their race will be accessed through school administration. This research will only be including and analyzing the data of students who identify as Black or White.

**Intervention**

Email would be used to communicate with the teachers on meeting times and location. Teachers will engage in texts including, but not limited to, *Everyday Anti Racism* by Mica Pollock and *Why are All the Black Kids Sitting Together at the Cafeteria* by Beverly Daniel Tatum, and the journal article *Black Girls Matter: Pushed Out, Overpoliced and Underprotected* by Kimberly Crenshaw. Given the shortness of the intervention, specific chapters from the books will be assigned. Discussions and reflections will be led by the open ended questions developed by Shockley and Banks (2011) in their IET program, and additional questions created for this current research proposal. Written reflections based on IAT results, prompts, and assigned readings will be done in physical journals.

Teachers will begin the training at the end of the summer. The structure of the meetings will be similar to the IET program (Shockley & Banks, 2011), but condensed into a smaller time interval. Like the cultural diversity training initiative in Greece (Psalti 2007), meetings will take
place over the course of three months and the group will meet eight times for six hours per session. Meetings will take place on the weekend. The diversity training will start midway through August and make its way into the school year.

Participants in the experimental group will initially take the Race IAT, administered online. Based on their learned results on their bias, teachers will be instructed to reflect in their journals. After this process is complete they will be assigned their first reading assignment. Once they have completed their assigned reading, teachers will be asked to write freely afterwards and bring their work into the next meeting. Participants will discuss the readings in class, led by a trained facilitator. Readings and discussions on anti-Blackness in our society and in the school system will go on throughout the entire training. In group discussions, facilitators should first encourage smaller group discussions before starting a larger conversation as a whole group. This should help participants gather their thoughts before having an added pressure of discussing very vulnerable topics to a larger group. However, facilitators can be flexible in how they go about navigating group discussions based on the needs of the participants.

Halfway through the training, participants will write an essay based on a few questions, some of which were adapted or taken from Shockley and Banks (2011) IET program, which are:

1. What do you believe that society thinks about issues related to class, culture and race? (Shockley & Banks, 2011, p. 229)

2. “What do you think about these issues—is it different or the same from what you think society believes?” (Shockley & Banks, 2011, p. 229)

3. What does anti-Blackness mean to you? What do you think it means to our society?
Question three was added onto the questions created by the IET program, to focus on the topic of anti-Blackness which this training is delving into. For the beginning of the program only one question will address the subject of anti-Blackness to not overwhelm the participants before they have had time to investigate their own understanding of it. This is assuming that participants would not have put as much investigation into anti-Blackness before this training period.

In addition to readings, participants will be asked to engage in reflection through creative projects, which was also an element of the IET program developed by Shockley and Banks (2011). The medium they use to present their reflections can be fairly open ended, as long as they approve it with their facilitator. For example, this could be presented in the form of poetry, film, sculpture, drawing, painting, or another medium that the participant finds most suitable for their own analysis. They will be given multiple sessions to work on their presents, and outside of meeting time if needed. In addition, their reflections should incorporate chosen topics brought up in past reading assignments and discussions. For example, like the IET program, they will be asked during meeting time to illustrate and present to the cohort about a time when they or their peers may have been biased against a Black student and how anti-Blackness may have played a role (Shockley & Banks, 2011). The participants will present and discuss their projects to their cohort. After the participants’ presentations they will be given free time to write down their thoughts or reactions to the activity. Next, they will be asked to discuss in a smaller group what they wrote about, and finally bring their thoughts to the larger group. The purpose of this group discussion work is to support the participants in continuing to delve into the topics they will be investigating.
When the training comes to an end, participants will receive their final essay prompts. One of the questions was developed by Shockley and Banks (2011) IET program and two of the questions were created for this research proposal to focus on anti-Blackness specifically. The questions at the end of the program will be more targeted at addressing anti-Blackness, since at this point they would have had spent two months studying this topic. The questions would be:

1. Have you found yourself feeling biased against the Black community? How do you think this may vary compared to other people of color? Do you think anti-Blackness is prevalent in the rest of our society? (Please provide examples where you see fit.)

2. How do you think you can address combating anti-Blackness in the classroom?

3. “Discuss where the foundations of this bias might lie, and how it has come to be—this could be because of family influences, media, your own belonging to a group or not.” (Shockley & Banks, 2011, p. 233)

At the end of the training, teachers will write down their goals in how to be better advocates to their Black students and how they will continue to address their own biases. They will then be given books to continue to read on anti-Blackness in our society and the school system, and will be required to continue to meet once a month with a trained facilitator for the remaining time left in the school year. They will be instructed to continue to discuss their teaching practices and classroom experiences, and be encouraged to collaborate with their peers on working towards their goals. In addition, they will be instructed to continuously check in with their students to make sure that they also get a chance to voice their needs to the teacher. This will hopefully encourage
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students to feel a sense of agency in their education and feel seen by their teachers. This will also continue to enforce a collaborative learning environment for both the teachers and students.

Procedure

School administration will be contacted and from there teachers will be asked to participate in the training. Four schools will be contacted in total and half will be randomly assigned to the experimental group and the other assigned to the control group. All of the teachers in the experimental group will be provided a consent form they will be asked to sign. The consent form will be detailing what they can expect from the training and the purpose of the study (see Appendix B). The training will take place in the following summer. Teachers will meet for three months, starting halfway through August. Sessions will each be six hours long.

All of the students' families will be sent a consent form before they are surveyed the first time. The consent form will mention a brief description of the purpose of the study. It will also state that their children will do a teacher evaluation twice over the course of a year and their GPA will be looked at, however their names will be left out of the research collected (see Appendix C).

The first survey would take place at the end of the school year before the teacher training period starts that summer. This will give an idea of what the teachers' baseline practices are before diversity training. It will also get a sense of how students feel about their teachers at the end of that school year and their GPA before the training. Students in the teachers first class period of the day, at the end of the year, for both the experimental and control group will all be surveyed. After the training is complete, at the end of the
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next school year students in the teachers first class period will be surveyed again. GPA, paired with the students' race, will also be collected for each student during the time of the first and last survey. The purpose of this longitudinal analysis is to get a sense of the teacher's progress before and after the diversity training through the students survey responses and grade shift.

**Results**

The data collected for this proposal was all hypothetical. Since students would be surveyed and their GPA would be recorded at two time points, a repeated ANOVA was used. The hypothetical data found a significant interaction between time and race for GPA, \(F(1, 1261) = 1889, p < 0.001\). Before the training period Black students would show a lower GPA score (M = 79.89) compared to their White Peers (M = 83.94). After the training period Black students will show an increased GPA (M = 89.16), which would be similar to their White peers (M = 87.61), as shown in **Figure 1**.

**Figure 1**

Experimental Group: Student GPA Before and After Training Period
Note. This graph shows the mean scores of Black and White students in the experimental group. Black students' GPA is lower than their White peers initially. After the training period the graph shows Black students having a higher GPA than their initial score, and their GPA is closer to their White peers.

Black students in the control group would show the same initial lower GPA before the training period (M = 79.10) compared to their White peers (M = 84.24), however after the intervention period their GPA will only show a slight increase (M = 84.89) and their White peers' GPA around the same (M = 80.24), as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2
Control Group: Student GPA Before and After Training Period

Note. This graph shows the mean scores of Black and White students in the control group. Black students' GPA is lower than their White peers initially. However, after the training period the graph shows Black students only having a slightly higher GPA than
their initial score. On the other hand, their White peers have a slightly decreased GPA score compared to their initial score.

The hypothetical data also showed a significant interaction between race and time for the survey responses $F(1, 1261) = 828, p < 0.001$. Black students in the experimental group will show less connection initially ($M = 2.51$) compared to their White peers ($M = 3.43$), and after the training period show a more similar connection to their teacher ($M = 3.99$) compared to their White peers ($M = 3.55$), as shown in Figure 3.

**Figure 3**

Experimental Group: Survey Responses Before and After Training Period

![Graph showing survey responses](image)

*Note.* This graph shows the mean scores of Black and White students in the experimental group. Black students' teacher report survey scores are lower than their White peers initially, showing a decreased connection compared to their White peers. After the
training period the graph shows Black students having a greater connection score, which is more similar to their White peers.

In the control group, this hypothetical data showed the Black students in the control group would have a similar initial lower connection to their teachers (M = 2.45) compared to their White peers (M = 3.52). After the intervention period, Black students showed a slight increase in connection (M = 2.70), but still lower than their White peers connection score (M = 3.43), as shown in Figure 4.

**Figure 4**

Control Group: Survey Responses Before and After Training Period

![Graph showing survey responses](image)

*Note.* This graph shows the mean scores of Black and White students in the control group. Black students' teacher report survey scores are lower than their White peers initially. This shows a decreased connection compared to their White peers. However,
after the training period the graph shows Black students only having a slightly increased connection score, and still lower than their White peers.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to design an accessible diversity training that can be added onto already existing school initiatives, and hopefully give educators better tools to specifically support their Black students. This research should be one of many possible proposed solutions in trying to enact change when addressing the criminalization of the Black community. The goal of SEL was originally to support Black students (Comer, 1991; Edutopia, 2011), but now has been critiqued for not having initiatives in place that support their students of color, and instead benefitting White students in their academic growth (Kennedy, 2019; Barnes, 2019). To recenter this program in its initial purpose and to address anti-Blackness within the school system, this research is proposing the implementation of a diversity training for educators.

This research was inspired by Shockley and Banks (2011) and Psalti’s (2007) diversity training programs. However, the current research proposal aims at highlighting the fact that neither of these studies looked at the outcome the training had on the students. They both used the teachers as an indicator of the success of the program, which leaves out the experiences the students have with these teachers. The goal of the current study is to propose research that investigates the impact diversity training actually has on students, both academically and in the connection they have to their educator. This study also focused on Black students, based on the large body of research revealing higher levels of discipline rates in the K-12 school system (Rodriguez & Welsh, 2022).
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This study used mock data and hypothesized to find that teachers that participate in the diversity training program will be better equipped to support their Black students. This is shown in the hypothetical data representing Black students within the experimental groups presenting a larger GPA improvement compared to their White peers, and compared to Black students in the control group. On the other hand, the mock data showed Black students in the control group demonstrating a slight grade improvement from their initial lower GPA scores compared to their White peers. This slight improvement could be a factor of the natural grade improvement as a student gets older. This study proposed that Black students in the experimental group will also show a better connection to their teachers through survey responses, while Black students in the control group will show a lower score in their connectedness to their teachers compared to their White peers. The survey aims to give students the opportunity to express the individual relationship they have to their teachers, something that focusing solely on a GPA cannot do.

The hypothetical findings for the current research proposal is in line with both Shockley & Banks (2011) and Psalti’s (2007) research, which found that teachers in these diversity and cultural awareness training felt more prepared to be support systems for all of their students. The current research proposal findings would help SEL address some of the criticisms of the program, which note that many SEL programs are not appropriately training teachers to work with students of varying racial backgrounds (Barnes, 2019). The current study proposes that the diversity training will both benefit both the teachers and Black students' success in the classroom.
Helping students feel supported and understood is vital, as it can promote them to feel more inspired by school. For example, Ewing et al. (2021) conducted a qualitative study in which they interviewed students who attended alternative schools that supported individuals who were deemed at risk of dropping out (Ewing et al., 2021). Ewing et al. (2021) found one of the factors that helped these students feel more engaged and inspired to attend school was the ways in which their school made them feel supported and welcomed by the community. The goal of the current diversity training proposal is to further push philosophies established in programs like the alternative schools Ewing et al. (2021) investigated. The current research aims to support teachers as they build a safe and welcoming environment for all of their students, which in turn fosters their students viewing them as allies as opposed to disciplinarians. The current study’s hypothesis is in line with Ewing’s et al. (2021) findings that better teacher support will enhance the students' relationship to their educator and support them in feeling more academically inspired. As Heitzeg’s (2009) research highlighted, the disproportionately high rates of Black students being disciplined and criminalized by the school system has led to many of these students to drop out of school. The current research proposal supports research such as Ewing’s et al. (2021), which brings attention to how far teacher support can really go in keeping students from dropping out.

If this diversity training does not promote better student-teacher connection and academic growth, this could be suggestive that the diversity training would need to be further investigated and altered. An unsuccessful outcome for the training could also mean that the outcome variables used are not representative of the effectiveness of the diversity training, and in that case alternative operationalizations should be investigated.
Overall, it is important that before any diversity training is implemented, that it be thoroughly thought through and tested to ensure that it is reliable. When testing a diversity training, researchers must be careful that the training is not jeopardizing the students educational experience. For example, researchers must be cognizant if a new diversity training is doing more harm than good and teachers are inappropriately going about changing their practices within the classroom. To address this issue, diversity programs should continue to be tested even after they have been implemented to ensure that it is up-to-date and continuing to support their teachers and students. An additional way to assess the effectiveness of a training is to check in with the students, through surveys or interviews, of the teachers who underwent the diversity training. This can help get a sense of if the program is continuing to enact meaningful change and how the larger student body is feeling towards it.

Limitations

There have been many critiques of diversity training in schools, specifically on the effectiveness of such programs. For example, Paluck (2006) pointed out a lack of experimental research on how to measure the causal impact diversity training programs have on teachers. In addition, the author questions the effectiveness of talking about bias and stereotypes actually has on changing practices (Paluck, 2006). The current research is geared towards measuring the success of this diversity training through an experimental lens. However, it is important to recognize that this is a correlational study and the results do not guarantee a causal relationship between the training and students' success in school. To address Paluck’s (2006) point on if awareness of biases is enough to bring about change, this study proposes that after the training period, teachers would be
instructed to continue to meet and discuss with their cohort and facilitator. Hopefully this will encourage teachers to continue to keep their biases in check and to strategize with their peers on how to best support their Black students. That being said, it cannot be assumed that this effort will guarantee a long term practice shift for all teachers participating. It would be useful to investigate ways to measure the success of this diversity training by operationalizing teachers' practices to see how their biases may or may not have changed before and after the training period. For example, as previously mentioned, Owens (2022) research using eye tracking and vignettes was successful in measuring biases in teachers by taking note of the extent to which the teachers watched the Black students in the video and pointed out misbehavior.

To avoid demand characteristics, this research does not propose classroom observations or teacher self-report, and instead solely focuses on students' academic success and the connection they have to their teacher. This operationalization is intended to demonstrate the success of the teacher training, however there could be instances where a student’s grades and survey responses are not reflective of the teacher’s practices. There could be confounding variables that influence a student's academic performance and connection they have to their teacher. For example, students' socioeconomic status and the institution they attend also have an impact on their experience at school.

In addition, this research does not address the intersectionality of racial categories. For example, students within the same racial group may have different forces either working against them or helping them that impact their academic outcomes. Some students may have families with a higher socioeconomic status. Lareau (2002) found in
her research that across different racial groups, families in middle and upper classes both stressed the importance of outside-of-school intervention, which can benefit the students' grades. Whereas students from families with lower socioeconomic status did not have the time or resources to seek out-of-school support (Lareau, 2002). The current study does not take socioeconomic status into account, or the many other individual or environmental variables which can potentially impact students' performance and relationship to school.

Another limitation of this research is that it focuses on individual biases, but does not address how teacher bias may vary based on racial makeup of the individual school. The schools suggested for this study are all located in New York City, which tends to have a lot of racial and cultural diversity, however this research does not control for or analyze the racial makeup of the school. The school a student attends can influence the type of treatment the student is receiving from school administration. Research conducted by Owens (2022) found that compared to predominantly White schools, teachers that taught at schools with predominantly Black and Brown students were more prone to refer Black and Brown students to the principal's office for similar behaviors also demonstrated by their peers. Overall, their research revealed that the targeting of Black and Brown students had 27% to do with the teacher’s individual bias, and 73% had to do with the rate of referral bias at that institution the teacher was coming from (Owens, 2022). Owens’ (2022) research reveals that institutional practices and racial makeup of an institution can impact the rate at which teachers target Black and Brown students. Essentially, this clearly is a systemic issue as well as an individual one. However, this
current study only focuses on individual teacher bias, which still is a problem that needs to be addressed within the school system.

Future Directions

Future researchers (or those carrying out this proposed study) should take into consideration how socioeconomic status and the racial makeup of the school can impact the students' performance and connections they have with their teachers. This can help researchers when taking into account class and organizational differences to optimize the teacher diversity training so that it covers these topics through an intersectional lens. The purpose of this is to encourage teachers to get a more nuanced understanding of the community they are focusing on. In turn, this understanding of how intersectional forces impact students, will inspire teachers to further understand and support Black students based on their individual needs, and understand that not all Black students have the same experiences.

Another future direction this research could investigate is including other students of color, of varying racial or ethnic groups in the sample. The current study only focused on Black students, but there is more to work to be explored and discussed around the experiences of other students of color within the school system. The focus on the Black community is not to invalidate or deny the experiences of other people of color, but instead is a call to action to address the large body of research investigating and showing anti-Blackness in the school system (e.g. Crenshaw, 2015; Heitzeg, 2009; Milner, 2013; Owens, 2022).

Given the results that were found in the research conducted by Owens (2022), future studies should consider strategizing ways that diversity training can target schools
with large populations of Black and Brown students. In addition, given that Owens (2022) found that teacher discipline rates towards Black students varied by institution, principals and administrators in the school system should be encouraged to participate in diversity training as well. This has the potential to encourage institutional change in the school’s practices and values, and not just the individual teacher. If the diversity training is implemented school-wide, this could encourage a more institutional change and ensure that even when the training is complete, the wider school community are all continuing to follow a practice of self-awareness through education to better support all of their students. Furthermore, if school administrations enforce ongoing diversity training within their institutions, this can continue to keep all of the educators’ racial biases in check. Hopefully, this will also help address the criticism of diversity training not encouraging individual change of the teacher’s practices (Paluck, 2006).

Conclusion

The Black community has been historically vulnerable to a racist society that has socially and systematically targeted them. Teachers need to take this into account as they support Black students. Oftentimes it is our most vulnerable students that need the most support. Therefore, it is essential that teachers educate themselves and hear the needs of their Black students. It cannot just be up to one individual, or one teacher, to create real change. The school administration needs to put effort into addressing biases and give agency to Black students in their educational experiences. Diversity training is one way schools can actively promote and encourage equality within schools.

Training practices and support outlets for educators need to be thoughtfully utilized, as well as curated based on the needs of their students and staff. A school's
overall mission should always be optimizing the educational experience of all of their students, and support their teachers in the process. The role a teacher takes on is by no means an easy task. The school administration needs to meet teachers halfway in their journey, as they care for the varying needs of up to thirty different students at a time. Teachers, just like their students, deserve to feel seen and supported by the school community. The role of the educator should not be looked at as an individual with limitless knowledge to give to their students, but rather an individual who just like their students is learning and growing everyday.
References


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Appendix A:

Teacher Reflection Survey! Help your Teacher Improve 😊

Please circle for your answers

What grade are you in?
Sixth  Seventh  Eighth

What race(s) do you identify with?
Black  White  Hispanic/Latinx  Asian American/Asian Pacific Islander  Native American or Alaskan  Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

What is your gender identity?
Woman  Man  Non-Binary  Other identifications:__________________

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<th></th>
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<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>My teacher treats me kindly</td>
<td></td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>My teacher treats me fairly compared to my classmates</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>When I am confused about new topics my teacher helps me understand</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>When my teacher is upset with me they try to stay calm and talk to me about it</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>I understand why my teacher disciplines me</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>My teacher respects me</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>My teacher respects my ideas</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>My teacher likes me</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>My teacher supports me in the way I need to be supported</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I have learned a lot from my teacher</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I like my teacher</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>I am never sent out of the classroom when my teacher is upset with me</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>My teacher knows when I am confused and/or having a hard time with classwork</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>My teacher supports me when I am having a hard time outside of school</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>I feel supported and cared for by my teacher</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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Appendix B:

Teacher Consent Form for Research Participation

Title of Project: Teacher Diversity Training: Revealing Biases and Changing Practices

Researcher: Deva Grumet Bass, Psychology student at Bard College, advised by Psychology faculty Justin Dainer-Best

Your consent is being requested to participate in a research study. Below, we outline what the study will involve, so please read this mindfully as you consider whether or not you want to participate.

Purpose of Research: Our research seeks to understand how teachers can better address their own implicit biases, which are the automatic biases that all of us have about certain groups of people, that we may not be directly aware of. The goal of this research is to address the high rates of Black students being disciplined within the school system, and understand how teachers can be better support systems to them.

Procedure to be Followed: You would be expected to participate in a three month training period, where you would engage in texts, discussions, reflections, projects and presentations that address anti-Blackness and how it has manifested within society, and specifically the school system. You will take a short Implicit Associations Test (IAT), in which the results can stay private to you. This research will be held in the school building you are currently working at.

Benefits / Risks: The only potential risk of this study could be feelings of discomfort when talking about biases and prejudices, and how it pertains to your own practices. However, this study aims at supporting you in how to create a safe and effective learning environment for your students, specially students that identify as Black.

Time Duration: Participation will last three months, and meet a total of eight times. The training will begin at the end of August and make its way into the school year. Sessions would last six hours each and be held on the weekend.

Statement of Confidentiality: Identities will be protected by keeping all the data collected anonymous. Names will be shared during the training period to build a sense of community with your cohort, but participants will be required to keep identities and personal information shared within the cohort confidential.

Voluntary Participation: You may decline to participate.
Termination of Participation: You may wish to not participate at any point during the research.

Questions about the research or participation can be sent to Deva Grumet Bass (dg3908@bard.edu)

SIGNING BELOW IMPLIES THAT YOU ARE AGREEING TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY.

Please complete and return by June 10th. If this consent form is not returned the researchers will automatically assume that you are not participating.

I, __________________________, agree to participate in a program of research named above and being conducted by Deva Grumet Bass.

________________________________________Signature of Participant

Date __________________________

________________________________________
Please print your name here.

______________________________Signature of Investigator

Date __________
Appendix C:

*Parental or Guardian Permission Form for Research Involving a Minor*

**Title of Project:** Teacher Diversity Training: Revealing Biases and Changing Practices

**Researcher:** Deva Grumet Bass, Psychology student at Bard College, advised by Psychology faculty Justin Dainer-Best

Your consent is being requested for your child to be a participant in a research study. Below, we outline what the study will involve, so please read this mindfully as you consider whether or not you want your child to participate.

**Purpose of Research:** Our research seeks to understand how teachers can better address their own implicit biases, which are the automatic biases that all of us have about certain groups of people, that we may not be directly aware of. The goal of this research is to address the high rates of Black students being disciplined within the school system, and understand how teachers can be better support systems to them.

**Procedure to be Followed:** This research will be held at the students school. The child will complete a teacher evaluation in their first class period with that teacher at the end of the school year. The students would report their race, grade they are in, and gender. The teacher evaluation would be in the form of statements about their teacher in which they answer on a scale of strongly agree to disagree. The administration would then send the researchers the students' grades, paired along with the students’ race. The White and Black students' grades would be used. Students will be kept anonymous. The same exact procedure would then happen again at the end of the next year.

**Benefits / Risks:** We do not predict any risks for this study, as students are used to filling out teacher evaluation surveys. Their identity would always be kept anonymous to the researchers, teachers, and public. There are no known benefits for the students.

**Time Duration:** Participation in the study should not take more than 20 minutes. The students will be surveyed in the beginning of class, at the end of school year. The same amount of time will be needed at the end of the following year.

**Statement of Confidentiality:** Identities will be protected by keeping everything anonymous when data is collected and reported. Students will not be asked to state their names on the survey.
Voluntary Participation: You may decline to let your child participate, and your child is also allowed to refuse to participate as well.

Termination of Participation: You or your child may wish to not participate at any point during the research.

Questions about the research or your child’s participation in it can be sent to Deva Grumet Bass (dg3908@bard.edu)

SIGNING BELOW GIVES YOUR CHILD PERMISSION TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY WHILE SCHOOL IS IN SESSION AND YOU ARE NOT PRESENT.

Please complete and return by June 10th. If this consent form is not returned the researchers will automatically assume that your child is not participating.

I, the parent or guardian of ________________________________, a minor _____ years of age, permit their participation in a program of research named above and being conducted by Deva Grumet Bass.

_____________________________ Signature of Parent or Guardian

Date ______________________

____________________________________
Signature of Investigator

Date _________

Please print your name here.
Appendix D:

Preregistration

Preliminaries

Study Title
Teacher Diversity Training: Revealing Biases and Changing Practices

Investigator's Name and Affiliation
Deva Grumet Bass, Bard College

Date of Preregistration
3/28/23

IRB Status
- IRB Review Not Necessary
  - Due to the fact this research is hypothetical.

Variables

What are your independent / grouping / predictor variables (including mediators and moderators)? Explain how you operationalize each variable.
- Condition: Whether or not the teachers are receiving the teacher diversity training
- Student Race
  - Self reported by survey

What are your dependent / outcome variables? Explain how you operationalize each variable.
- Student GPA
  - I will be looking at GPA across classes before and after the training period
  - This will be collected from school administration
- Survey responses
  - I will be looking at survey responses across classes before and after the training period
List any explanatory variables. These are variables that you included in your study, but are not central to your main predictions.

- Grade of the student
- Gender of the student

Did you create new, or modify existing, variables for this study?
- Yes, I am creating a self-reported questionnaire on the connection the student has to their teacher.

Hypotheses

What are your primary study hypotheses / research questions?
- The research hypothesizes that this diversity training will help teachers become more aware of their biases and better advocates for their students of color.
- This research hypothesizes that the students of color, with teachers who underwent the training, will show a greater grade improvement compared to students of color in the control group over the course of a year, and an equal post GPA score compared to their White peers.
- This research hypothesizes that after the training period students of color will show increased connection to their teachers shown through survey responses before and after the training.

Do you have any exploratory hypotheses / research questions? If so, describe them below:
- Does the student's gender moderate the connection students have to their teachers and GPA improvement?
- What factors make students of color more or less prone to experience unfair treatment within the school system? Does this vary based on race and/or socioeconomic status?

At the time of this preregistration, describe the status of data collection (delete those that do not apply):
- Other: The data collected is mock data
If you selected 'Other' to describe the status of data collection, please explain here:

- The data collected is mock data, since this research is a proposal.

If you indicated above that data collection is 'complete' or 'in progress,' have you (or anyone else) already conducted any statistical analyses?

- No data analyses have been performed

**Sampling**

What is your target sample size?

- Around 200 teachers
- Around 3,000 students

How was your target sample size determined?

- Target sample size based on constraints / convenience (e.g., size of subject pool, available money to pay participants, access to participants)

How will you determine when to stop collecting data (i.e., your stopping rule)? (Delete all that do not apply)

- When the target sample size is reached

**Research Design**

What type of research design are you using?

- Experiment

**Experimental designs only**

If you are conducting an experiment, what is the nature of the manipulation? (Delete all that do not apply)

- Between-participants

What are the total number conditions in your study? (e.g., a 2 x 2 design has 4 total conditions):

- 4 conditions (2 x 2)
  - Teachers in control versus experimental condition
  - White students versus Black students
TEACHER DIVERSITY TRAINING

Will the experimenters be aware of the condition to which a particular participant has been assigned? (Remove one)

- Yes, the experimenter will be aware of the condition to which a particular participant has been assigned

Will participants be randomly assigned to conditions?

- The schools will be randomly assigned to either experimental or control conditions

If you selected 'No' for how you will assign participants to condition, please explain here:

- The schools will be randomly assigned to a condition, but the teacher participants will be assigned the condition based on the school they are in.

If you are predicting an interaction (in your hypotheses), describe the nature of that interaction below:

- The teachers in the experimental group will hopefully be better advocates to their Black students, whereas they may already advocate for their white students
  - Based on better teacher support this should:
    - Increase the students grades
    - Foster better relationships between students and teachers

Data Analysis Plan

What will be your criterion for determining statistical significance?

- $p < .05$

Will your tests of significance be:

- Two-tailed

Will you exclude participants from data analysis based on any of the reasons listed below?

- Failed attention check
- Failed manipulation check
- Missing data

What criterion (if any) will you use to determine whether a participant is an outlier?

- Greater than 3 standard deviations from the mean

Which statistical tests will you use to conduct your data analyses? (Delete all that do not apply)

- ANOVA